



COMESA SECRETARIAT'S INTERVENTIONS TO MITIGATE COVID-19'S EFFECTS



PRESENTED BY Mrs. Alice
TWIZEYE, Senior Trade Officer
Trade and Customs Division



Regional Multidisciplinary
Centre of Excellence (RMCE)



20th May 2021

INTRODUCTION ON COMESA

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------|
| 1. BURUNDI | 12. MADAGASCAR |
| 2. COMORROS | 13. MAURITIUS |
| 3. DJIBOUTI | 14. RWANDA |
| 4. DR CONGO | 15. TUNISIA (2018) |
| 5. EGYPT | 16. SUDAN |
| 6. ERITREA | 17. SEYCHELLES |
| 7. ESWATINI | 18. SOMALIA (2018) |
| 8. ETHIOPIA | 19. UGANDA |
| 9. KENYA | 20. ZAMBIA |
| 10. LIBYA | 21. ZIMBABWE |
| 11. MALAWI | |

- Established in 1994
- Member States: 21 Countries
- Population : 583 Million (2019)
- GDP : 805 Billion USD (2019)
- Area : 11.8 Million KM²





COMESA Main Objective

Initiate and promote cooperation programs and regional integration aimed to achieve the removal of all physical, technical, fiscal and monetary barriers to intra-regional trade and increase commercial exchanges of goods and services between Member States and beyond while ensuring the wellbeing of its people.

Technical and resource mobilization

- Establishment of a technical team/COVID19 taskforce to coordinate the resource mobilization activities and efforts from external source to support member States to manage the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Engage and cooperate with benefactors and development partners for resource mobilization including submission of grant proposals for funding.
 - Re-negotiations for amendments and/or addendums to the existing development partners funded projects to include activities related to measures aimed at curbing the spread of the COVID19 Pandemic,
- 
- Four thick, yellow, curved lines are positioned in the bottom right corner of the slide, arranged in a roughly circular pattern.



Technical and resource mobilization

In collaboration with its agencies COMESA:

- Provide support to the Continental COVID Response Fund: For instance the Trade Development Bank (TDB) donated USD 500,000 to support COVID-19 response across Africa by the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).
- Secretariat supported in distribution of Personal protective Equipments (PPEs) in some key border points: TDB also donated locally procured personal protective equipment and COVID-19 testing consumables to Zambia, Ethiopia, Uganda, DRC, Eswatini, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Djibouti, Kenya, etc.
- Provide a credit facility to support women in business to increase the production capacity in some essential commodities occasioned by the health emergency, in collaboration with COMESA Federation of National Associations of Women in Business.
- In addition, the AfDB has in principle earmarked a grant amount of USD 2.3 million for a 3-year project to Strengthening the capacities of pharmaceuticals manufacturing enterprises in the COMESA region

Technical and resource mobilization



- Implementation of the COMESA Digital Free Trade Area (DFTA) i.e., e-commerce, e-logistics and e-legislation is a key area of intervention that will facilitate trade amidst the physical restriction put in place by the Member States, in the fight against rapid spread of the covid19 pandemic.
- Raise awareness, communication and capacity building to all border management official and stakeholders in collaboration with **(ICMPD)** through the Migration EU Expertise **(MIEUX)**
- The COMESA Secretariat through the RMIC, in collaboration Ze-pre, is in advanced stages of finalizing a technical paper (policy paper)/ proposal for the establishment of the COMESA Pandemic Risk Pool Fund. The proposal is aimed to provide member States with a swift response mechanism for dealing with future pandemics outbreaks and offer products and services that alleviate the negative impact on both the public and private sectors



Technical and resource mobilization



To facilitate safe cross-border mobility, migration, and related trade flows, some actions were undertaken including :

- Assessing the training/awareness-raising needs in COMESA MS regarding border management in the framework of public health emergencies/crises.
- Building the capacities of border officials of COMESA MS to manage the movements of people during public health emergencies/crises.
- Enhancing dialogue and inter-agency cooperation at COMESA MS level in the field of border management, as well as cross-border cooperation, to better address health-related challenges at the border.
- Raising awareness among migrants and mobile populations crossing the borders (including small-scale cross border traders and truck drivers) of the measures in place at the borders in the framework of the current COVID-19 related crisis.
- In kind donation to informal small scale cross border traders



TRADE AND TRANSPORT FACILITATION

At the outbreak of the pandemic, unilateral and uncoordinated measures resulted into heightening restrictions in cross border trade.

- Subsequently the Secretariat put in place measures to facilitate intra-regional trade amidst the pandemic.
- COMESA's Interventions have been premised on its core undertaking with respect to trade liberalization and customs cooperation
- The focus is on opening space for cooperation and dialogue amongst member states when instituting various measures in order to facilitate continued flow of goods and services across the region.

COVID 19 related Guidelines to facilitate movement of goods and services in the region

- The guidelines were developed in cognizant of Articles 50 and 110 (cooperation on health a). control of pandemics b. facilitation of movement of pharmaceuticals within the common market) of the COMESA Treaty. The guidelines aim at:
- Protecting citizens from the COVID-19 Virus Pandemic whilst at the same time safeguarding the existing trading arrangements in order to minimize the disruption to cross-border trade in goods and services;
- Ensuring continued flow of essential goods and services including but not limited to food and pharmaceutical supplies during lockdowns;
- Encouraging efficiency in customs clearances, especially at border points for trucks and businesspersons, while ensuring safety.

COVID 19 related Guidelines to facilitate movement of goods and services in the region

- Facilitating cooperation and coordination amongst member states;
- Enhancing regional awareness on measures instituted against the COVID -19 pandemic by various authorities to stakeholders regarding measures involving the movement of goods and services in the region; and
- Advocating and supporting Member States' health safety measures and efforts to address closure of firms, jobs losses and make regional economies more resilient to any future crisis.

Corridor Trip Monitoring System (CTMS)

The Tripartite Council of Ministers on 29th July 2020 adopted the harmonised Tripartite Guidelines on Trade and Transport Facilitation and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Safe, Efficient and Cost-Effective Movement of Goods and Services during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The Tripartite Guidelines & SOP are aimed at containing the spread of COVID-19 whilst facilitating trade and transport of goods and services across the Tripartite region during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following key principles were agreed on in the Tripartite Guidelines & SOP:

- The type of COVID-19 tests to be performed on drivers and crew before commencement of a cross border trip and at borders.
- Only drivers with negative COVID-19 test results would be allowed to undertake cross border trips.
- The validity period of negative COVID19 test results.
- Mutual recognition of the COVID-19 test results between and among all Member/Partner States and RECs and
- Implementation of integrated and harmonised electronic surveillance and monitoring system to monitor driver health, track drivers and vehicles and for contact tracing.



COVID-19 ONLINE PLATFORM

- The overall objective of the online platform is to provide business facilitation solution for the COMESA region amidst COVID-19 period.
- The portal is intended to bring the 21 COMESA Member States and its business community to a virtual information platform of essential products, specifically pharmaceuticals, PPEs, food fuel and other locally produced goods to ensure sustainability of livelihood during the pandemic.
- The platform will help Member States, business communities and citizens of COMESA region and beyond with Goods and services produced and available within the region and Contact details of suppliers and buyers



COVID-19 ONLINE PLATFORM

- Will assist Member States with potential to produce and supply different types of goods, especially the essential products, food supplies as well as connect buyers to suppliers thereby promoting and fostering regional intra-COMESA trade.
- Cross-border traders can access trade related regulatory measures in responses to COVID-19 and promote implementation of the COMESA COVID-19 Guidelines to facilitate movement of goods and services in the region;

Study on Socio-Economic Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Evidence from COMESA Region

- Secretariat also undertook the study in light of the restrictive measures that disrupted global demand and supply with spill over effects across all sectors of economies due to global inter-connectedness.
- This study presents insights into the COVID-19 impacts on key macroeconomic indicators, trade and trade related issues and aspects of social and organizational culture in COMESA Member States.
- The study provides recommendations to Secretariat and Member States for consideration.

OTHER INITIATIVES

THE SECRETARIAT HAS ALSO BEEN INVOLVED IN VARIOUS ACTIVITIES INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

- **CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**
- **INITIATIVES ON GENDER AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**
- **COMESA AND AFRICAN UNION CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC) PARTNERSHIP ON COVID-19 RESPONSE AND GUIDANCE**
- **COLLECTION AND PUBLICATION OF COVID19 RELATED INFORMATION IN MEMBER STATES.**



Thank You For Your Kind
Attention